

CONFIDENTIAL.]

REPORT

[No. 9 of 1881.]

NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 26th February 1881.

LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of newspapers.	Place of publication.	Number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	
BENGALI.					
Monthly.					
1	"Bhārat Shramajivī"	Calcutta	2,100		
2	"Grāmvartā Prakāshikā"	Comercolly	175		
Fortnightly.					
3	"Sansodhini"	Chittagong	600	17th February 1881.	
4	"Purva Pratidhwani"	Ditto	.....	
6	"Rajshahye Samvād"	Rajshahye	31		
Weekly.					
6	"Ananda Bazar Patrikā"	Calcutta	700	14th	ditto.
7	"Arya Darpan"	Ditto	.....	25th	ditto.
8	"Bhārat Mihir"	Mymensingh	671	15th	ditto.
9	"Bengal Advertiser"	Calcutta	2,000		
10	"Bardwān Sanjivani"	Burdwān	296		
11	"Dacca Prakāsh"	Dacca	850	20th	ditto.
12	"Education Gazette"	Hooghly	745	18th	ditto.
13	"Hindu Ranjikā"	Bezuleah, Rājshāhye...	200	23rd	ditto.
14	"Medini"	Midnapore	.....	19th	ditto.
15	"Murshidābād Patrikā"	Berhampore	487		
16	"Murshidābād Pratidinidhi"	Ditto	.....	18th	ditto.
17	"Navavibhākar"	Calcutta	850	14th	ditto.
18	"Paridarshak"	Sylhet	.....	13th	ditto.
19	"Pratikār"	Berhampore	275		
20	"Rungpore Dik Prakāsh"	Kakinī, Rungpore	250	17th	ditto.
21	"Sādhārani"	Chinsurah	500	20th	ditto.
22	"Sahachar"	Calcutta	500	14th	ditto.
23	"Som Prakāsh"	Changripottā, 24-Pergha.	.....	21st	ditto.
24	"Sulabha Samāchār"	Calcutta	4,000	19th	ditto.
25	"Srihatta Prakāsh"	Sylhet	440	14th	ditto.
26	"Tripurā Vartāvaha"	Commillah	.....	
Daily.					
27	"Samvād Prabhākar"	Calcutta	700	17th to 24th February 1881.	
28	"Samvād Purnachandrodaya"	Ditto	800	21st to 25th	ditto.
29	"Samāchār Chandrikā"	Ditto	625	21st to 25th	ditto.
30	"Banga Vidya Prakāshikā"	Ditto	500	21st to 25th	ditto.
31	"Prabhāti"	Ditto	.....	
32	"Samāchār Sudhābarsan"	Ditto	.....	
ENGLISH AND URDU.					
Weekly.					
33	"Urdu Guide"	Ditto	365	19th February 1881.	
HINDI.					
Weekly.					
34	"Behār Bandhu"	Bankipore, Patna	500		
35	"Bhārat Mitra"	Calcutta	500	17th	ditto.
36	"Sār Sudhānidhi"	Ditto	200	21st	ditto.
37	"Uchit Baktā"	Ditto	.....	19th	ditto.
PERSIAN.					
Weekly.					
38	"Jām-Jahān-numā"	Ditto	250	18th	ditto.
URDU.					
Weekly.					
39	"Tijarat-ul-Akhbār"	Ditto	.....	
ASSAMESE.					
Monthly.					
40	"Assam Vilāsinī"	Sibsagar	.....	

POLITICAL.

SRIHATTA PRAKASH,
February 14th, 1881.

THE Srihatta Prakásh, of the 14th February, confesses to a feeling of deep disappointment at reading the reply of the Secretary of State to the recent deputation of the merchants of Manchester who

The Liberal Ministry and the cotton duties.

waited upon him on the subject of the cotton duties. Lord Hartington appears to have quite changed his views, and spoken as if he was not that person who he was believed to be. It was thus that in utter disregard of the interests of the two hundred and forty millions of the human beings, he hastened to conciliate the powerful weavers of Lancashire. Is this the way in which the Liberals will answer the expectations of the people of India? The Secretary of State has reproved Sir Ashley Eden for the opinion His Honor had expressed regarding the cotton duties. This was extremely unjust on Lord Hartington's part. Sir Ashley has simply sought to do his duty. [See paragraph 2 of our Report of the 12th instant.]

SAMACHAR,
February 14th, 1881.

2. The *Sahachar*, of the 14th February, contains an article on the

The secret Russian correspondence.
Treaty between Russia and Shere Ali.

secret Russian correspondence found by General Roberts at Cabul. We extract the following observations from this article:—An

impartial history of the late Afghan War has yet to be written. Most of the facts regarding this war yet remain shrouded in mystery, which the military and the political authorities have persistently sought to perpetuate. The practice is doubtless in conformity with the dictates of the tortuous diplomacy of the present day: according to it, he is not a statesman who cannot conceal his own faults by finding fault with others. Of late, two Amirs of Afghanistan have been successively driven from power. Shere Ali died in exile; his son Yakub also is an exile in India, and has suffered political extinction. The British Government has nothing to fear from them; and yet the tortuous diplomacy of the day requires, it would seem, their condemnation. It seems as though General Roberts was born to help in bringing about this result. Even if the Afghan War had not brought any advantages to the British Government, this find of secret Russian correspondence would have amply justified all the blood and treasure expended in its prosecution. We have not much to say regarding the correspondence itself. There cannot, of course, be the least doubt as to their authenticity. The English are not like the French. His hostility to Russia led Napoleon, with a view to inflame the minds of the British nation against that power, to forge and publish a will which was attributed to Peter the Great. We believe and have confidence in British Generals like Roberts; and must therefore believe as genuine this Cabul correspondence. Even if all this were granted, and it were admitted that Shere Ali had really entered into treaty relations with Russia against the British Government, it would yet remain to be proved that he did anything very wrong. Shere Ali was placed between two powerful Governments. He was always, as his father had been before him, favourably disposed towards the British power; nay, was assiduous in cultivating friendship with it, and made persistent efforts to obtain a written treaty from it. All his friendly offers, however, were rejected, and he was thus in a manner compelled to seek an alliance with Russia. But for the repulse he met with at the hands of the British Government, Shere Ali would never have consented to such an alliance. And was his action open to blame? The enlightened Sovereigns of Europe not unfrequently act in this way. Can anyone assure us that Austria has not entered into a secret treaty with Prussia? But after all we are really unable to pronounce any opinion as to the genuineness of this Russian correspondence. We are afraid lest the expression of any doubt on our part should be construed as disloyalty.

3. The *Navavibhakar*, of the 14th February, regards Lord Lytton's recent speech in the House of Lords on the subject of the retention of Candahar as an utter failure. As an oratorical effort it was indeed

Lord Lytton's speech in the House of Lords.

successful, but by seeking to defend his Afghan policy, he has made himself a laughing-stock of the public. The Editor speaks approvingly of the replies made by the Duke of Argyll and Lord Northbrook.

NAVAVIBHAKAR,
February 14th, 1881.

4. The *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, of the 14th February, remarks that the Kohlapore conspiracy was confined to a few ignorant and illiterate men. In fact

The Kohlapore conspiracy.

none but such persons could ever think of raising money by charms, or of subverting British rule. Fortunately the number of such people is gradually diminishing. The Europeans in this country are always regarded with fear, and this feeling will long secure them against violence. That the Kholapore conspiracy should be successful was simply an impossibility. The masses are not bloodthirsty, and they not only shrink from such acts of violence as were contemplated by the conspirators, but positively hate them. This is evident from the fact that the conspirators were betrayed by their own adherents.

ANANDA BASAR
PATRIKA,
February 14th, 1881.

5. The same paper remarks that, however great may be the difference between the Liberals and the Conservatives in all other matters, there is one point on which they perfectly agree; namely, their subservience to Manchester. The Government of Lord Lytton obliged the merchants by imposing the license tax on the people of this country; the Government of Lord Ripon has exempted certain class of piece-goods from all customs duties. This last measure will seriously injure the interests of the newly-established cloth-mills of India. The people have no voice in the distribution of the public appointments. Thus Sir Ashley Eden has prohibited the employment of Bengalis in the public service in Behar. By passing the Penal Code and the Vernacular Press Act, Government has in a large measure taken away the liberty of the people; what little had been left in the matter of trade is now destroyed. In thus, however, seeking to enrich Manchester at the expense of India, the rulers will in the long run but injure their own interests. If India is impoverished, it is England that will have to pay for the costs of the British Indian Empire. Already the English Exchequer has had to pay seven millions of pounds on account of the Afghan War, and, God forbid, should there be ever a war with Russia for the possession of this country, the expenditure would reach a figure, at least a hundred times that attained during the late Afghan War. It is England that would be called upon to meet it.

ANANDA BASAR
PATRIKA.

6. The *Bhārat Mihir*, of the 15th February, observes that there is nothing contained in the Russian correspondence found by General Roberts at Cabul that might strengthen the arguments of the Conservatives in favour of the proposal to retain Candahar. What this correspondence does show is that Shere Ali was determined to preserve the independence of Afghanistan, and that he was not prepared to sacrifice it even when seeking an alliance with Russia. The Editor then urges on Government the necessity of speedily retiring from Candahar.

BHARAT MIHIR,
February 15th, 1881.

7. We extract the following observations from an article in the *Som Prakash*, of the 21st February, on the same subject:—The publication of the secret Russian correspondence found by General Roberts at Cabul will remove the doubts which have existed in many minds regarding this matter. Those that have hitherto sought to justify their Afghan policy on the strength of this

SOM PRAKASH,
February 21st, 1881.

The secret Russian correspondence.

correspondence will be now disappointed; nor will it serve the purpose of those who had hoped to discredit the present Ministry by making much of it. This correspondence clearly shows that Russia did not urge Shere Ali to show any hostility to the British Government; nay it counselled him to remain on friendly terms with the latter; that the Russian Government could not at once refuse the protection sought by the Amir, because he was an old friend; that, after all, fear of Russia was not the true cause of the invasion of that country by the British Army; that the treaty between Russia and Shere Ali does not appear to be genuine, and that there is nothing in it which can criminate Yakub Khan. Now that the Ministry are in possession of the facts, justice should be done to Yakub Khan.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.

PARIDARSHAK,
February 13th, 1881.

8. Referring to the appointment of Mr. Lethbridge's selections from Modern English Literature as the text-book in English for the Entrance Examination of 1882, the *Paridarshak*, of the 13th February, asks: Do not the Senate of the Calcutta University feel the least scruple in impairing the efficiency of its teaching for the sake of benefiting an individual?

PARIDARSHAK.

9. The same paper regards as mean the conduct of the *Englishman* and other newspapers who, it would seem, are extremely mortified by the intelligence that the Secretary of State has issued orders for the repeal of the Vernacular Press Act. It was not to be wondered at, remarks the Editor, that a Press Law would be passed under a narrow-minded Conservative Government. With the newspaper press free it would have been simply impossible for Lord Lytton to carry on the work of administration in the high-handed manner he did, and hence the enactment of a law curbing the liberty of the press became necessary. But under the rule of a pious Ripon, of a Gladstone, the chief of the Liberals, and of a liberty-loving Hartington, there does not exist the same necessity. One is therefore inclined to believe as true the rumour that the Vernacular Press Act will shortly be repealed.

There is not the slightest justification for this odious measure. Its apologists, of course, seek to justify it on two grounds: namely (1) that by their writings Native Editors spread sedition, and (2) that for their punishment the provisions of the Indian Penal Code are not sufficiently effective. Both statements have been so often refuted, that it is needless to expose once more in any detail the fallacy involved therein. To be brief, the first proposition is not true. Even if it were, the best way of checking the spread of sedition is certainly not the adoption of any repressive measures. That treatment would not be efficacious which would merely seek to remove the outward symptoms of a disease, while the real disease was silently doing its work within. If disaffection is really spreading among the people, is it not wiser to endeavour to remove its cause than to labour for the purpose of checking its manifestation?

PARIDARSHAK.

10. The same paper is glad to notice that the Indian Association has perceived the importance of making persistent agitations for the removal of the political grievances of the people of this country. The memorial recently made by this body to Lord Ripon is a well-reasoned document; and it is to be hoped will receive due consideration. The Editor entirely concurs in the observations contained in the memorial on the subjects of the Vernacular Press Act, the Arms Act, and the high-handedness of the Executive officers of Government; but is not prepared to

The memorial of the Indian Association to Lord Ripon.

subscribe to the suggestions regarding the license tax made by the petitioners. A defence of this harassing tax is impossible.

11. The same paper exhorts the inhabitants of Sylhet to bestir themselves for the purpose of considering the proposal to create a Judicial Commissionership in that district. It is not yet too late to do this. The injury to public interests would be so great if the proposal were carried out that it should be strongly protested against.

PARIDARSHAK,
February 13th, 1881.

12. The same paper dwells on the injurious consequences that have resulted from the passing of the Arms Act. The people have been by this measure rendered defenceless against the attacks of wild beasts, and made more dependent than ever upon Government in every matter which requires the exertion of physical strength, or the handling of any weapon. Is it not really a retrograde step? It behoves Lord Ripon to remove this stain on the fame of the British Government, and thus earn the gratitude of the voiceless millions of this land. The Editor then refers to the statements contained in the letter of a correspondent regarding the ravages which are being committed by a wild elephant in certain villages lying in the southern part of Sylhet. Already five men have been killed, and the inhabitants are deserting their homesteads through fear. Not possessing any guns, they are, of course, quite helpless. The local authorities, although long since apprized of the facts, have not yet moved in the matter.

PARIDARSHAK.

13. The *Srihatta Prakásh*, of the 14th February, is exceedingly gratified at learning that the Secretary of State has sent instructions for the repeal of the Vernacular Press Act. The expectations raised by the accession of the Liberals to power are therefore about to be fulfilled.

SRIHATTA PRAKASH,
February 14th, 1881.

14. The same paper notices in highly eulogistic terms the kind and considerate treatment which the officers of his court have always experienced at the hands of Mr. H. Muspratt, Judge of Sylhet. If any of them happen to fall sick, Mr. Muspratt is unremitting in his efforts to provide him with good medical treatment. For this purpose, his purse is always open.

SRIHATTA PRAKASH.

15. The *Sahachar*, of the 14th February, is indignant at the attitude which is being taken up by the *Englishman* and the *Pioneer* newspapers in the question of the repeal of the Vernacular Press Act. The Editor ridicules the arguments adduced by these journals to justify a continuance of the measure, and earnestly hopes that Lord Ripon will disregard the advice of these sage (?) counsellors.

SAHACHAR,
February 14th, 1881.

16. On the same subject, the *Navavibhakar*, of the 14th February, makes similar observations. It is really amusing to find, remarks the Editor, that the *Englishman* and other papers, which do not understand even a syllable of what is written in the vernacular journals, are ever forward in expressing opinions regarding the tone of the Native Press. Thus they are constantly stating that, owing to the enactment of the Press Law, an improvement has taken place in the tone and style of the native prints. The expression of such views by the *Englishman* and other Anglo-Indian papers is due to sheer impertinence on their part. It is a grievous error to suppose that the passing of the Press Act has had any beneficial influence on the vernacular newspapers. There has been no change in the style of their writing, which is worth notice; if there has been any, that must be attributed to the progress of events, and to the fact

NAVAVIBHAKAR,
February 14th, 1881.

that native newspapers are now edited by a class of men who are possessed of better culture and taste than the older journalists, and not to the enactment of the Press Law. In short, the advocates of the Press Act have not been able to adduce one argument in favour of its continuance. The *Englishman* has not shown that the provisions of the Indian Penal Code are not sufficient for the purpose of checking seditious writing. His pleas in favour of continuing the Press Act are indeed novel; but will be found to have no force when we consider that the Liberal Ministry have not hastily reversed any one of the Acts done by their predecessors, but that their attitude is one of cautious deliberation. The formal repeal of the Vernacular Press Act is necessary, if only to show that Government does not distrust the people of this country.

NAVAVIBHAKAR,
February 14th, 1881.

17. The same paper briefly describes the growth of Municipalities in England, and the importance of introducing the system of Municipal government into this country. The existing Municipalities possess only a nominal independence. The district authorities are all in all, and the non-official members possess little power. In the few places, however, where the elective system has been introduced, better results have been obtained. It is therefore desirable that the benefits of the system should be more largely extended. Certain high officials, however, are extremely opposed to the idea of conferring municipal independence upon the natives of this country. Sir Ashley Eden affords a notable instance of this. The Calcutta Municipality has become an eyesore to him. The reply of the Viceroy, however, to the address presented him by that body is highly encouraging. His Excellency is favourable to the extension of the elective system of Municipal government, and it is therefore probable that if efforts are now earnestly made to obtain the privilege, the promoters of the movement will not be disappointed.

Lord Ripon and the system of Municipal Government.

SULABHA SAMACHAR,
February 19th, 1881.

18. The *Sulabha Samachar*, of the 19th February, remarks that the oppressions of the Government officials have driven the Sonthals, a quiet and simple people, to rebellion. The preliminary work in connection with the Census in Sonthalistan had been entrusted to a number of unprincipled men who subjected the females to gross insult. This, coupled with a fear of fresh taxation and compulsory emigration, produced the greatest excitement among the Sonthals. The presence of troops has, however, restored a temporary tranquillity. It behoves Government to inflict condign punishment on those officers through whose culpable behaviour all these troubles have been occasioned.

The Census among the Sonthals.

SULABHA SAMACHAR.

19. The same paper refers to the increase of drunkenness which has been brought about by the introduction of the outstill system. It is, however, amusing to read in the last Administration Report that, although there was an increased consumption of liquor, there was no corresponding increase of intemperance. Government appears to be very anxious to make out that the operation of the outstill system has not resulted in any harm. The truth, however, is that, even villagers have begun to indulge in the use of liquor which has been made unprecedentedly cheap.

The outstill system.

SADHARANI,
February 20th, 1881.

20. The *Sadharani*, of the 20th February, contains three eloquently written articles which are in a manner related to each other. The first is headed, "India as a whole," and shows how the people have never endeavoured to realize the idea of India as a grand unity. The poet, the philosopher, and the journalist each contemplates it from his own standpoint, and thus it appears to him to be possessed of one aspect only. An

The Census.
The Press Act, &c.

observer indeed fails to grasp this idea of unity in the rich and endless variety of its natural scenery and of objects of art; in the variety of its races, and its wealth of historical associations. The second article is taken up with reflections on the Census, which is spoken of as a gigantic effort on the part of the British Government. Now, three things are necessary to secure the success of a Census, namely (1) a power of organization, (2) a desire on the part of the rulers to know the true state of the country, and (3) the willing co-operation of the people. Now in the late Census, the first two requisites have not been wanting. For fear of fresh taxation, however, the people have not been willing to co-operate with the rulers, and have shown a distrust of their motives. In the last article, the Editor points out the supreme importance of disabusing the minds of the people of the wrong notions produced by the taking of the Census. Through distrust of their motives, Government has passed certain objectionable laws, while the taxes press heavily upon them. The consequence of this has been that the people have now learnt in turn to distrust their rulers. If therefore Government really desires to secure their loyalty, and does not propose to rule them with a rod of iron, it should confide in them and mitigate the pressure of taxation. The Arms Act and the Press Act, both of which are the outcome of distrust, should be repealed. The first-named Act might be allowed to stand on the Statute Book, but only for particular occasions and localities, and shorn of the provisions which make a distinction between Hindus and Christians; but the sooner the latter is abrogated, the better. And then as to taxation, the license tax should be levied from the well-to-do traders at higher rates, while the petty traders should be entirely exempted from it. It should be seen that those who pay the Road and the Public Works Cesses derive at least some benefit in return for what they pay, and if to this were added the introduction of a permanent land settlement in Madras, the North-Western Provinces, and certain other parts of the country, the establishment of State granaries against famine, the conferring upon the tenantry of Bengal of the right of occupancy and a fixity of rents, and a reduction of the home charges, British rule will be extolled as both powerful, just, and humane.

21. The *Dacca Prakāsh*, of the 20th February, states that the work of the Census was performed with ease at Dacca. The local authorities met with hearty co-operation from the educated section of the community. There was no disturbance. This time the figures may be expected to be more accurate than those obtained at the last census.

DACCA PRAKASH,
February 20th, 1881.

The same paper dwells on the expenditure annually incurred by the State on account of the sojourning to Simla. The absence of the chief officials from the metropolis for the greater part of the year is another disadvantage. The Editor hopes that Lord Ripon will see his way to the discontinuance of this practice.

DACCA PRAKASH.

RAJKRISHNA MUKHOPADHYAYA, M.A. & B.L.,

Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,

The 26th February 1881.

